

### **REMARKS**

Claims 1, 3, 7, 7 and 10 are pending in this application, of which claim 1 has been amended. No new claims have been added.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 7 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, for failing to comply with the written description requirement.

Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to comply with the written description requirement, and the 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, rejection should be withdrawn.

The Examiner has maintained from the previous Office Action all of the prior art rejections based on various combinations of Lin et al., McCormack et al., APA, Miller and Zeller.

Applicant respectfully traverses all of these rejections.

McCormack et al. discloses a method for substantially preventing the extraneous deposition of electroless metal on selected areas of an insulating substrate which comprises providing the insulating substrate in said selected areas with a poison capable of lowering the catalytic activity in the vicinity of surface imperfections which are present in said areas.

McCormack et al. has been cited for teaching that the oxidizing agent is selectively applied to the non-electrode "space" portion, including all the parts of the space portion of less than 30 microns apart.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Column 5, lines 34-42 disclose:

In a preferred embodiment, the entire surface of the insulating substratum may first be rendered sensitive to the reception of electroless copper. The active, poison containing material may then be applied to limited areas of the base material, as by printing or silk-screen stenciling. Thereafter, the base is contacted with an electroless metal deposition solution to deposit electroless metal on the sensitized areas not coated with the poison containing material.

This passage teaches no more than that only certain areas of a substrate are coated, in contrast to selective coating of "all parts of the space portion" in which the

distance between electrodes is smaller than 30  $\mu\text{m}$ , as claimed in the instant application. McCormack et al. fails to disclose with particularity the location of the parts to be coated, while the claimed invention does just that.

APA suggests no more than that the short circuits are more likely to occur in the space portions smaller than 60  $\mu\text{m}$ . Thus, the combination of Lin et al., APA, and McCormack et al. fails to teach, mention or suggest that short circuits, which would normally occur in the space portion between electrodes smaller than 30  $\mu\text{m}$ , are prevented by the method recited in claim 1, which includes the steps of coating selectively an oxidizing agent within this small distance of 30  $\mu\text{m}$ , which is much smaller than 60  $\mu\text{m}$ . This capability of applying the oxidizing coating in this small region of 30  $\mu\text{m}$  is not provided by the teachings of the prior art references.

Applicant's attorney conducted a telephone interview with the Examiner on January 21, 2009 to discuss these issues. In particular, it was argued that APA discusses only that short circuits are more likely to occur in the space portion smaller than 60  $\mu\text{m}$ , and that McCormack et al. merely teaches that certain areas of a substrate are coated. Thus, the combination of the cited references fails to teach or suggest selectively coating of "all parts of the space portion" in which the distance between electrodes is smaller than 30  $\mu\text{m}$ ," as claimed. It was emphasized that coating the space portions between electrodes only in the areas where the distance is smaller than 30  $\mu\text{m}$  is more difficult than coating the larger areas up to 60  $\mu\text{m}$ , as suggested by the prior art.

The Examiner acknowledged that this may be the case, but that the claims would have to be amended to recite that the oxidizing agent is selectively coated to only coat all parts of the space portion in which the distance between the electrodes is smaller than 30  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to recite this distinction, and the prior art rejections should be withdrawn. The claims are now in condition for further examination.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Deposit Account No. 04-1105.

Dated: January 26, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

By 

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